



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**South West Water Awards £1.2 Million Marketing Recovery Fund
to Support Tourism Industry**

06 November 2024 – In a significant step to support the recovery of the tourism industry across Devon, on October 30, 2024, South West Water pledged a £1.2 million Destination Marketing Recovery Fund over the next three years, to be managed by the English Riviera BID Company.

This fund has been allocated to help recover booking levels and mitigate the ongoing impact of the Cryptosporidiosis outbreak in Brixham, Devon, earlier this year. The outbreak, detected on May 14, 2024, triggered widespread negative media attention at local, national, and international levels.

This negative exposure has left lasting consequences for tourism and hospitality businesses across Devon, resulting in a wave of cancellations extending into the summer season and beyond. According to an independent impact survey commissioned by the English Riviera BID Company, the financial and reputational losses from the outbreak have been profound.

In response, the English Riviera BID Company, as the area's lead Destination Marketing Organisation, collaborated with Brixham Chamber of Commerce, Brixham Town Council, Visit Devon, and Torbay Council to address the economic and reputational challenges facing the English Riviera and Devon brands. Together, these partners sought support from South West Water to facilitate the recovery process and to mitigate reputational and brand damage.

Chris Hart, Chairman of the English Riviera BID Company, expressed gratitude for South West Water's commitment to building-back Devon's thriving tourism industry.

"The Cryptosporidiosis outbreak had an unprecedented impact affecting not only short-term tourism to Devon, but also our reputation as being one of the UK's leading holiday destinations. Our goal with this Recovery Fund is to restore visitor confidence, rebuild our reputation, and bring booking levels back to pre-outbreak levels. This partnership marks a critical step in our recovery, and we are grateful for South West Water's commitment to helping the tourism industry recover from this crisis."

The Destination Marketing Recovery Fund will enable a series of comprehensive marketing initiatives aimed at restoring Devon's appeal to prospective visitors. This includes national advertising campaigns, with television commercials set to begin airing in early Spring 2025.

The English Riviera BID Company is currently in the process of contracting a professional marketing agency to spearhead these efforts, ensuring a targeted approach that addresses both the scale of the economic setback, and the positive potential of reinstating the English Riviera, Brixham and Devon as leading UK travel destination. The marketing campaigns will encompass multi-channel promotions, with a strong emphasis on rebuilding trust in the destination's brands and ensuring a swift recovery in visitor numbers.



Vince Flower, Chair of Visit Devon, expressed his appreciation for South West Water's response to the Cryptosporidium outbreak and their commitment to revitalising Devon's tourism industry.

"The outbreak undeniably impacted Devon's tourism, causing significant disruption to local residents and businesses, while also challenging Devon's reputation as one of the UK's premier holiday destinations. The impact of this outbreak, coupled with the need to respond positively, highlights the strength and importance of collaborative partnerships. We look forward to working closely with our partners at the English Riviera BID Company, Brixham Chamber of Commerce, Brixham Town Council, and Torbay Council. Together, we aim to leverage this Recovery Fund to restore visitor confidence, rebuild our reputation, and boost booking levels across Devon. We are grateful for South West Water's commitment to supporting the tourism industry's recovery from this crisis."

Matthew Crabtree, Chair of Brixham Chamber of Commerce thanked South West Water for their help in providing this recovery fund to help Brixham mitigate the negative response of the crisis.

"Brixham Chamber was delighted to hear that South West Water have agreed to help fund a recovery marketing campaign designed to mitigate the negative exposure suffered by Brixham, Torbay, and Devon. Achieving this outcome is the result of a huge amount of work, and testament to the collaborative approach taken by the organisations involved. Thank you to all those who worked on this especially the team at the English Riviera Bid Company."

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

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About the English Riviera BID Company

The English Riviera Business Improvement District (BID) Company is a collaborative effort between over 1000 local businesses, authorities, and stakeholders dedicated to enhancing the tourism experience and promoting sustainable economic growth for Torbay including the towns of Brixham, Paignton and Torquay.

For more information for consumers visit www.englishriviera.co.uk and for businesses visit www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid.